



Moroder on 'Metropolis'

Video

£2.00
37869
\$1.95

SEPTEMBER 1985

What's New
VCRs, TVs, Gear

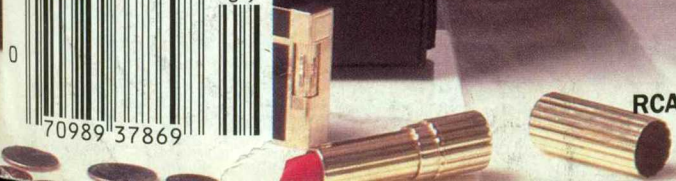
The #1 Magazine of Home Video

Sony's Tiny 8mm
Only \$375 a Pound

Roger Ebert's
With His

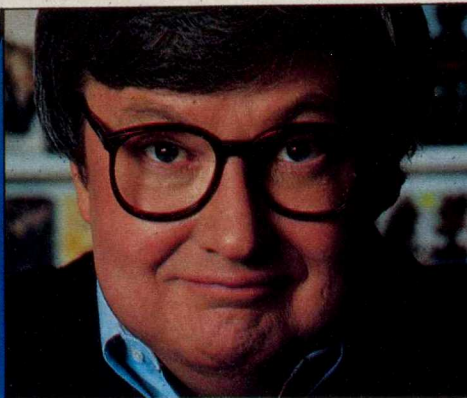
Growing Pains
8mm's 1st Year

BERGER-BRAITHWAITE VIDEOTESTS
Toshiba's VHS VCR • Panasonic VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS
RCA Auto-Focus Camera • Phoenix Ambience/Surround Decoder





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About the Cover. Sony's got a leg up on the competition with its tiny 'Mini-8' 8mm camcorder system. Cover photo by Henry Wolf.

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44 Video

Level 1 disc requiring a disc-player with a built-in micro-processor. (This includes all current home models except Pioneer's \$299 LD-660.) Yet unlike the *MysteryDiscs* or any other narrative interactive-disc games, *Lorna* is a stream-of-consciousness collage that not only requires an interactive left brain (to deduce and to make logical choices) but an interactive right-brain (to feel what the character's feeling and to understand her life).

Whatever *Lorna's* and *Lorna's* fates, Lynn Hershman's scored one for the history books. Or perhaps the historydiscs. —Frank Lovece

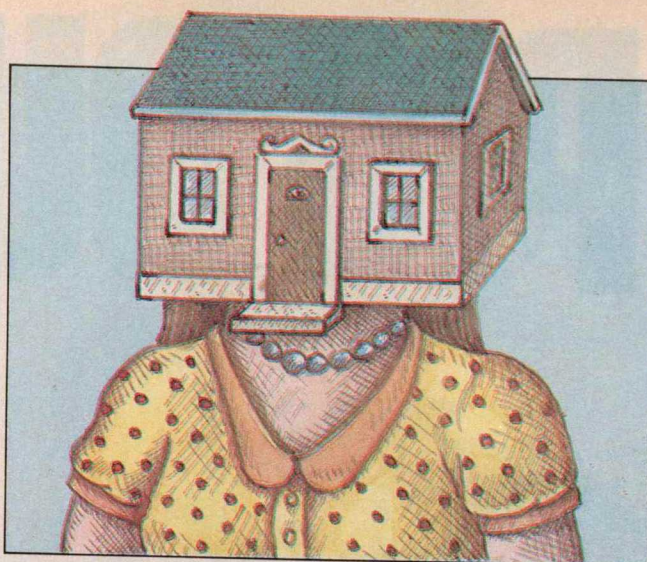
More Electro Boxes

A few months ago we reported that GE had introduced the Homeminder, an electronic security and appliance-control system that plugs into conventional AC outlets. The box hooks up with TV sets and features icon graphics that show whether the stereo in your bedroom is on or the lights in the family room are off. It sells for about \$400.

Now the company that made the product is selling a similar one that interfaces with the Apple IIe and c series computers and the Commodore 64. It's \$120 list, and consists simply of a micro-processor (it's really a peripheral, in computer parlance) that can accommodate 72 lights and appliances in your house.

Another gizmo, Butler in a Box, does similar home chores for lazy folks. The Butler is a voice-actuated microprocessor, and it too will turn on your stereo or lights or desk fan or any other appliance, even if you don't ask it nicely. It sells for \$995, and its 32-year-old inventor, Gus Searcy, says proudly, "This product doesn't come from the labs at Texas Instruments. I did the algorithm for it and a friend of mine did the programming." Who needs such a toy? Searcy says, "There are over five million handicapped people in this country. That's a pretty big market."

Butler in a Box should have an obvious appeal to those who like to give orders.



Video Chip

Word from the RCA Lab in Princeton, New Jersey is of research on a home computer with a next-generation display processor chip that will be "super in video," according to John Clemmens, head of R&D on the project. Clemmens says the chip will produce images at a higher resolution and manipulation rate than anything now sold, and the result won't be blocky pixels. "It'll be much more like a real video shot," Clemmens says.

Will the television giant's home computer go the route of its ill-fated video-disc and die because of a lack of compatibility? Clemmens says RCA is still in the "thinking stages" on software standards, though he wants a machine that is "user lovable." He speculates that while the computer will have the standard entertainment, educational, and business applications, it may also be integrated with RCA's plans to enter the videotex market.

With an operating target price in the \$500-\$1000 range, Clemmens says RCA has not fully defined the needs of the customers it's after, though it's getting "closer and closer to product definition." He says, "the chips are so complex that to build a breadboard is quite difficult." So don't rush out to the store yet, although Clemmens adds "that doesn't mean [RCA] won't do something more mun-

dane first." —Ben Templin

Amiga News

Commodore's long-awaited Amiga computer should make other personal computers pale when it comes to video applications. The Amiga, Spanish for "girlfriend," promises to be the best creative device available for linking up live video with computer-generated animation. Shown at trade shows for two years, the Amiga displayed a bounc-

ing beachball which cast a shadow on the wall—an effect seen on many main-frame computers, but never on a home microcomputer.

The Amiga is a speed demon which uses three custom chips nicknamed Daphne (graphics), Agnes (animation), and Portica (sound). Optional peripherals will allow a "frame grabber" to capture video images in full color to be stored on disk. Computer-generated graphics and text can be overlaid onto videotape using a "gen-lock" box.

All this should give artists, designers, and videophiles an affordable tool that was previously available only on computers costing thousands of dollars. Amiga will begin at \$1295 list, plus the usual extras for peripherals. The machine will likely be competitive pricewise with other micro systems, but don't expect Commodore to give it away.

A preliminary review of the Amiga will appear in this space next month.

—Ben Templin

BEST SELLERS/HOME

1. **Print Shop.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
2. **Print Shop Graphics Library.** AP, C64, AT. Broderbund.
3. **Newsroom.** AP. Springboard.
4. **Video Works.** MAC. Hayden Software.
5. **Dollars & Sense.** AP, APc, IBM, MAC, TP. Monogram.
6. **Bank Street Writer.** AP, APc, IBM, C64, AT. Broderbund.
7. **ClickArt Effects.** MAC. T/Maker.
8. **Micro Cookbook.** AP, APc, APe, IBM. Virtual Combinatics.
9. **Original Boston Computer Diet.** AP, IBM. Scarborough.
10. **Print Master.** IBM, PCjr. Advanced Product Solutions.

BEST SELLERS/RECREATION

1. **Gato.** AP, IBM, MAC, PCjr. Spectrum Holobyte.
2. **Flight Simulator II.** AP, C64, AT, DG. Sublogic.
3. **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Infocom.
4. **Microsoft Flight Simulator.** IBM. Microsoft.
5. **Sargon III.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64. Hayden Software.
6. **Zork I.** AP, IBM, MAC, AT, CP/M, DEC, TIP. Infocom.
7. **Lode Runner.** AP, IBM, MAC, C64, AT. Broderbund.
8. **F-15 Strike Eagle.** AP, IBM, C64, AT. Microprose.
9. **Ultima III.** AP, IBM, C64, AT. Origin Systems.
10. **Summer Games II.** C64. Epyx.

LEGEND: AP=Apple, APc=Apple IIc, APe=Apple IIe, AT=Atari, C64=Commodore 64, COM=Commodore Pet/CBM, CP/M=5¼" and 8" formats, DG=Data General One, DEC=DEC Rainbow, EPS=Epson QX-10, IBM=IBM-PC, MAC=Apple Macintosh, PCjr=IBM PCjr, TIP=Texas Instruments Professional, TRS=TRS-80, VIC=Commodore Vic-20, VTR=Victor 9000, WNG=Wang Personal Computer, ZEN=Zenith 100.

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